



To: The Labor and Public Employees Committee
From: Vijay Nair, CSU-AAUP President
Date: February 17, 2011
Re: House Bill 5464

I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 5464, *An Act Concerning State Employees and Violence and Bullying in the Workplace*.

I am the president of the Connecticut State University American Association of University Professors, the union representing over 3,200 faculty, librarians, coaches, and counselors in the Connecticut State University System. Some of our members have reported being victims of bullying, but there is little we as a union can do to protect these members because bullying and most abusive conduct are not illegal in Connecticut. As many members as have come forward, there may be many more who have stayed silent. In order to know the extent of the problem, it is necessary to track statistics. However, these incidences will only be reported if the State mandates it. Currently, only illegal acts of harassment directed against protected classes are reported. Further, workplace violence policies do not cover bullying unless and until it becomes violent. It is for these reasons that our Executive Council unanimously passed a resolution in support of this bill.

We have all seen reports in the media of workplace bullying that have had tragic endings. In the past year, an academic - the editor of a literary journal at the University of Virginia named Kevin Morrissey - took his own life as a result of workplace bullying. The State of Connecticut is an employer to over 75,000 employees. As such, the State should be an example to the private sector, especially when the cost to this bill is minimal.

Sincerely,

Vijay Nair
CSU-AAUP President